

significance, discussion between the field surveyor and NC NHP staff is held to resolve discrepancies and determine proper significance. This process enables a site's significance to be put in a proper statewide perspective.

Rarity of species and natural communities is inherently complex. Some species are intrinsically rare, often being adapted to specialized habitat types which are also rare. A species may have a low reproductive capacity yet be able to persist in a special habitat because it is well-adapted to it and its dynamics. Other species are rare at least in part from habitat loss, loss of important pollinators or food sources, competition with non-native species, or a multitude of factors directly or indirectly related to human population perturbation of natural systems.

Definitions of Global and State Ranks

Global and State ranks are used in the following tables to give some measure for the rarity of a particular natural community, plant or animal. These rankings help to standardize discussion of these lists and provide some understanding of the reasons for listing.

GLOBAL RANKINGS

- G1** Critically imperiled globally because of extreme rarity or because of some factor(s) making it especially vulnerable to extinction. 1-5 extant populations.
- G2** Imperiled globally because of rarity or because of some factor(s) making it very vulnerable to extinction throughout its range. 6-20 extant populations.
- G3** Either very rare and local throughout its range or found locally (even abundantly at some of its locations) in a restricted range (e.g., a single physiographic region) or because of other factors making it vulnerable to extinction throughout its range. 21-100 populations.
- G4** Apparently secure globally, though it may be quite rare in parts of its range, especially at the periphery. 100-1000 populations.
- G5** Demonstrably secure globally, though it may be quite rare in parts of its range, especially at the periphery. 1000+ populations.
- G?** Unranked, or rank uncertain.
- G_Q** Questionable taxonomic assignment.
- T_** The rank of a subspecies or variety. As an example, G4T1 would apply to a subspecies of a species with an overall rank of G4, but the subspecies warranting a rank of G1.